**MMR_0069 LeRoy Thompson**



MMR NO. 69, E. LEROY THOMPSON

E. LeRoy Thompson, of Phoenix, Arizona, is the NMRA's 69th Master Model Railroader. LeRoy describes himself as "seventy years young," and has lived in Arizona for over sixty of those years. He worked for a major oil company for 25 years, reaching the position of retail sales manager, then owned and operated an automotive service and repair business for another 15 years. He retired in 1970 to devote all of his time to the many facets of model railroading, especially helping newcomers to the hobby. His vivacious wife, Dorothy, shares his hobby interests and is an enthusiastic Railette. Leroy and Dorothy have three children and seven grandchildren. Two of his grandsons are, he tells us, "great operators."

LeRoy has been in the hobby for 42 years. He was bitten by the model railroad bug when he and Dorothy visited the 1935 San Diego Exposition and encountered Minton Cronkite and his large O scale railroad. An O scale lone wolf for many years, LeRoy switched to HO after the war, joined the NMRA and the PCR, and found that he was no longer alone.

His ever-expanding layout is housed in a 25'x35' air conditioned building, along with a small machine shop and a comfortable visitor's lounge. Steam locomotives are LeRoy's primary interest, so his railroad, the Southern Pacific of Arizona, features the steam era. His loco roster includes at least one example of every wheel arrangement that the SP ever owned, from the 4-2-4 C. P. Huntington to the 4-8-8-2 AC-12. Many are scratch built; some are rebuilt imports. LeRoy also spends a lot of time rebuilding and detailing locos for his friends.

LeRoy has won several Regional and National contest awards. He is the only modeler to win both the Gold Award and the Craftsman Award with the same model, accomplishing that feat at the 1974 National convention. He received the PCR President's Award in 1975. LeRoy is a charter member and past president of the Thunderbird Railroad Club, has served as superintendent of the Arizona Division of the PCR, and has served two terms on the PCR Board of Directors. He is currently Vice Chairman of the Member Aid Committee, Chairman of the PCR By-Laws and Manual Committee, and a member of the Arizona Division Achievement Committee. His Achievement Certificates are Motive Power, Cars, Scenery, Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Association Official and Association Volunteer.